



August 23, 2010

Dear Kitchen Cabinet members,

This is the last in a series on state labor costs which I've covered over the past several weeks. I've been sending these Kitchen Cabinet updates to make you aware of how much of your tax money the state spends in various areas of government. We've looked at [the](#)

[University of Washington](#), [the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts](#), [the governor's office](#), [the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction](#), the [Washington State Investment Board](#), and the [Department of Social and Health Services](#). It's only fair then to focus on the state Legislature as well.

Did a friend forward this e-mail to you? [Click here](#) to sign up for these Kitchen Cabinet e-mail updates.

I've been sending out these updates for over three years now, and the upcoming 2011 session will no doubt be a very important one for our state. **Sign up to receive these updates and keep on top of what's going on in Olympia.**

Washington State Senate and House of Representatives



As of 2009 (the last budget year), the Senate employed 420 people, and the House of Representatives employed 497.

In the Senate, 92 people make more than \$99,000 annually in pay and benefits, or about 22%. In the House, 117 make that amount or more, totaling almost 25%. The secretary of the Senate makes nearly a quarter-million dollars a year in pay and benefits combined.

In both lawmaking bodies, most of the big earners are staff directors, lawyers, staff coordinators, and fiscal analysts...about what you'd expect. However, the Legislature is one of the few areas of state government which has already made sizeable cuts.

An interesting note is that from 2005 to 2007, the Senate added 184 jobs which accounted for a **70% increase in size**. Since the Republican Caucus has only gotten smaller since 2005 that means that those 184 Senate jobs were either **added to the majority party's caucus roster** or made up of "non-partisan" committee staff (**who are all hired by the majority party**).

As I've said before, most of the rank and file employees around the state make much less than \$99,000 in pay and benefits, but there are still some major exceptions which need to be addressed. **You can find all the information about state employee salaries on the website for the [Office of Financial Management](#).**

Questionable expenditures

Two separate incidents have come to light in recent weeks which I wanted to share with you. In one incident, the state auditor says that



Washington taxpayers were overcharged

\$306,000 for pens, paper and other office supplies sold to the Department of General Administration last year by Office Depot. GA disputes the claims but the auditor's office says the findings were based on a 12-month spot check of transactions made in 2009 under a contract Washington State and Office Depot have had since 2006.

While there was no fraud alleged or found, a spokesperson for the auditor's office summed it up by saying, *"They need to do a better job of monitoring."*



In another interesting development, I've learned that the state **Department of Labor and Industries recently got an exemption from the governor's agency spending limits so they could purchase 773 brand new, fully loaded Dell laptops for \$1.8 million.** While I have no

idea what these hundreds upon hundreds of new laptops will be used for, is it really prudent to make such an extravagant purchase with tax dollars when our state is in the middle of an unprecedented budget crisis?

Night Stalkers Don't Quit

One final note in this Kitchen Cabinet...I recently attended a fundraiser to raise money for some of the families of soldiers from Joint Base Lewis-McChord. Until that day, I believe the Night Stalkers had never allowed a non-family member civilian into their hangars on base. **It's quite an interesting story.**

During Christmas of 2009, my wife and I were on a flight to the Caribbean when I struck up a conversation with a fellow passenger who was reading a book called *Lone Survivor*. The book was about four Navy SEALs who where helicoptered into a ridge in Afghanistan, saw that a local shepherd had spotted them and chose not to kill him. The shepherd then went and informed the Taliban, and soon hundreds of enemy soldiers were hunting these four men through the mountains. Eventually, only one SEAL survived and was plucked out by helicopter in the rescue...but 10 soldiers died in the rescue attempt, and they were all SEALs and Night Stalkers.

The gentlemen gave me his book and I was blown away after reading it. I gave it to my friend and neighbor, a retired Air Force Colonel who flew C-130s, one of the transport planes they use in Afghanistan. I then read several other books on the subject, one of which was about an elite group of soldiers called "Night Stalkers" who fly SEALs, DELTA Force and Green Berets into remote and clandestine locations. **In the book, *Lone Survivor*, the Navy SEALs were flown to their location by the Night Stalkers.**



Until a few years ago, the Night Stalkers were entirely "black-ops"...nobody acknowledged their existence. During the 2010 session, a constituent of mine contacted me about a bill, and when I called him back, I ended up being connected to the man where he was stationed in Afghanistan! It turns out that the man was part of the Night Stalkers team.

Last week, he invited me to a family-only charity event hosted by the Night Stalkers at Joint Base Lewis-McChord inside their secure hangar, in which regular Army personnel aren't even allowed. I took my friend, the retired Air Force colonel, with me and we had a wonderful time. As it turns out, one of the Chinook helicopters in the Night Stalker hangar was the same helicopter used in the rescue mission detailed in the book, *Lone Survivor!* **Our community at Joint Base Lewis-McChord is home to one of the best trained units and I was privileged to be able to meet the men and some of their families, including some of the families of Night Stalkers who had been killed in action.**

In closing...

If you know someone in our district who might be interested in receiving these updates, please feel free to forward this e-mail to him or her.

You can always find information online by visiting my website at

www.SenateRepublicans.wa.gov/Carrell.

As always, if you'd like to contact me you can write, phone, e-mail, or stop by. My office phone number is (360) 786-7654, and my home phone number is (253) 581-2859. Or you can write me at **102 Irv Newhouse Building, P.O. Box 40428, Olympia, WA 98504-0428.**



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Sincerely,

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28th District State Senator